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quarrelsomeness were on the whole justly ascribed to those people who manifested these qualities; but I could never get people to allot differences in socially valuable qualities, to say for example that A. was a better or worse worker than B. or more or less generous.

I think that I was more conscious in the difference in the characters of the various Lepchas of Lingthem than the Lepchas themselves were; as a member of my culture I naturally judged people emotionally and liked or disliked them for differences of character rather than for their behaviour towards me. Towards the end of my stay I found that I had taken a really firm dislike to some people, particularly to Aga and Katel, whom I considered mean and sly and altogether unpleasant. Aga was fairly generally disliked, but when I told the people I was intimate with that I disliked Katel they obviously could not understand my reasons: he had not treated me badly in any way. When I tried to explain more fully my reasons for disliking him they would explain that he was foolish and did not know how to behave properly. For them this was a sufficient explanation; it wasn't his fault he was a fool and this was no reason for disliking him, provided he fulfilled his obligations. In the same way although lame orphaned Satéo through his clumsiness and incompetence always botched whatever work he was doing, nobody thought of reproving him or preventing him joining in the communal work—he was a liability on any job—because he was patently doing his best and couldn't help his clumsiness. If on the other hand he had been an able-bodied man who through laziness or spite was doing bad work he would undoubtedly be reprimanded and publicly shamed.

Lepchas are very unwilling to speculate on the motives of another's behaviour, whether in the past or present; they always turned aside such questions with the catch phrase 'Who can see into the heart of another?'

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Although it is difficult and of questionable value to try to describe the intellectual and temperamental characteristics of the average Lepcha it is perhaps worth while to point out some of their more pronounced group attitudes. The Lepchas possess remarkably vivid and exact verbal and visual memories. They do not prize intellectual quickness and it is on the whole not one of their characteristics. Numbers are practically meaningless to them and

153 802 Numbers are practically meaningless to them and numerical concepts play a very small rôle; in any question demanding numbers they will nearly always give in answer three or four alternatives. In some situations this is almost ludicrous; except for one or two lamas nobody knows his own age or even that of his youngest children in years; they all know the year they were born and what year they are now in, but if a child was born in Dog year they would be quite unable to work out its age today (1937 was Ox year and the child would be four) and they might just as well say that the child was two or eight. More than that, if you asked a person how many people were living in his house he would almost certainly get the number wrong; he could naturally recite immediately the names or rather the kinship terms of the people in his house; but it does not cross his mind to tot up the number and it is a mental operation of which nearly all Lepchas are incapable. The Lepchas count by twenties and use their fingers for all calculations; they count with the thumb against the fingers, putting the thumb on the base of the little finger for one, the first joint for two, the second joint for three, the tip for four and then going down to the base of the next finger for five and so on. There used to be long consultations to try and work out in how many days a fixed date for a calendrical feast would arrive; and on one occasion everybody except one lama arrived a day late, and the Muns frequently made a mistake of a day or more for their special festivals. They are quite incapable of working out what money they should receive for their cardamum; they may know that they have ten maunds and that each maund is worth Rs. 12; but unless they use sticks or some other memory guide they have absolutely no idea of what the total should be. The Mandal has to keep in his head the taxes due from each household but he does this by remembering the words and not the figures.

153 The Lepchas do not dramatise; and they do not alter their pace of thought or action except in emergencies which for the reason that they demand such alteration are considered particularly unpleasant. My impression is that the Lepchas think much more slowly than either the Nepali or the Indians, but since my knowledge of both these races is slight this impression is of little value; they certainly think quicker than the ordinary Somerset farm labourer, though infinitely slower than a European town dweller. I got the impression that they talked quickly, but that I think was due to the fact that the language was an unfamiliar one, and that I was straining to catch every shade of meaning.

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or fruits, or kick them about, or perhaps improvise syphons out of bamboo. Very often at feasts and large gatherings half a dozen children will play simultaneously at the same thing, but each playing by himself. At the numerous feasts and ceremonies I was present at over three months I only once saw children playing together, and this was a tug-of-war which lasted two or three minutes.

One of the chief pursuits of the older boys is the imitating of bird calls and the catching of small birds, usually in bamboo and thread snares. Nearly every boy over the age of nine could imitate bird calls accurately through whistling, and some of them were extraordinarily good at it; Chimpet in particular was so exact that unless I looked I could never tell whether it was a boy or a bird calling. Besides this direct imitation of bird calls, which is often used to lure birds to snares, the Lepchas have nonsense-syllable equivalents (similar to our *tu-wit to-whoo*), most of them extremely unlike the calls they represented, though the Lepchas maintained they were accurate. If the boys catch edible birds in their snares they take them home as presents to their mothers. A few of the older boys also learn to make and play bamboo flutes, receiving instruction from some older brother or friend.

When children do play together it is always an imitation of adult life (the one rare exception is the imitation of fighting animals). The courtyard outside the house is the favourite scene for these plays; using small sticks or bamboos which they cut with their little knives they play at building houses or making bridges or at fencing fields; at other times they may intimate a marriage or the performance of some religious ceremony. These plays are relatively rare, for they demand the simultaneous liberty of four or five children, which does not occur very often. They hold very little place in the childhood memories of adults. The chief things adults seem to remember from their childhood are physical mishaps, usually from falling, and being punished; nearly all adults remember being carried by their elders before they could walk properly.

Children between the ages of five and ten have a special almost private vocabulary which they use in talking to one another and which is much employed in their plays. Part of this vocabulary is baby words—deformations of ordinary Lepcha speech and onomatopoeic words; the rest is made up of rather violent terms of abuse—*pahoo ro*, may you be a feast for devils!, *kan-tit*, heap of

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eighty people, including men, women and children, would be present. They would spend the day feasting and drinking, and on some occasions would continue the party well into the following day. There would generally be some visitors from nearby villages and, in consequence, much exchange of gossip. These fortnightly meetings served the purpose of a newspaper and helped to keep the people in touch. They were almost the only break in a life of otherwise unceasing toil.

There are no shops in Lingtem, no doctor, and no school. The people are mainly self-supporting and grow all their own food. Such things as cotton, oil and salt are obtained from Mangen which, in addition to a few Marwari shop-keepers, has also a post office to which mails are delivered twice a week. This, however, is not much used, since the Lepchas are for the most part still illiterate. This means that in order not to forget a thing they do not find it necessary to commit it to writing. As a result, they have, like most primitive peoples, quite remarkable memories.

For the first few days we were left completely alone; not a soul ventured near us. Early each morning Dhawa and I would set off in our quest for people, but everywhere we went there was nothing but empty houses, each with its guardian dog. I began to get worried, for it certainly looked as though the Maharaja was right, although actually (but I only learned this later) the people were merely away working in their fields. And then one morning Geoffrey discovered an ancient alone in a house. He was toothless, decrepit, and ill, but willing to risk a visit. We decoyed him up to the monastery, gave him some medicine and plied him with cigarettes. As an informant he was useless; but his visit served to break the ice. Others followed, and the village soon realised that we really were harmless. Thereafter we were able to arrange for a regular stream of informants and someone or other usually came each morning to talk. In this manner we soon came to know most of the village by sight, and after the first few weeks were able to

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outstanding physique; for Chala's mother, when she was an old woman, later told her son that she was terrified at their first encounter. He seems also to have been noted for his promiscuity, a trait which Chala has himself inherited.

In addition to his official duties the Mandal gives much thought to the arrangement of local marriages. He has been doing this for so many years that he has now come to think of young people principally in terms of their suitability as possible marriage partners. He has so far acted as go-between for no less than sixty couples, and nowadays nobody ever thinks of asking anyone else to undertake this duty. In these cases he is called in not as village headman, but merely as an experienced member of the community whose opinion is trusted. His duties as Mandal, however, take him frequently to all the surrounding villages, and since he is on intimate terms with everybody, he is always in a position to make suggestions. Many marriages are of course settled by the families or individuals concerned; but even in cases such as these certain formal arrangements are later thought to be necessary. The ordinary man does not know the correct form of speech proper to such occasions, and for this reason the Mandal's services are still in much demand.

The Mandal's knowledge of his district is encyclopædic, and although he can neither read nor write he is able to quote without hesitation or mistake details of local administration which one would normally expect to find only in a book of statistics. He is slightly ashamed of being illiterate, but does not realise that his memory is quite extraordinary. He never smokes, and drinks less than others because he has to remember everything "in his heart and belly," as the saying is, and might otherwise forget. Because he was ill and lived a long way away we did not see a great deal of him, but on the few occasions when he came to the monastery his great delight was to sit on a chair. The only ones we had were of the camp variety; and having been with me all over the Himalayas were in the last stages of disrepair, and liable to fall to pieces at any moment. To the